of Jeeva by which Ramanuja means not that the finite consciousness is essentially identical with the Infinite, but that the finite cannot exist without the Infinite. In the case of both Nature and the individual soul, what Ramanuja teaches is not their unity or identity with God in any real sense, but their inseparable connection with him; To him ' nature is God' means nothing more than " nature cannot

- exist without God, or nature implies God."

In this connection, it will be advantageous to recollect the fundamental fact that religion evinces itself in three ways—in our conception of God, in our conception of ourselves and in our conception of the relation between God and ourselves; in other words, in our conception

- of the Infinite Self, in our conception of our individual self
- and in our conception of the relation between the Infinite Self and the individual self. To a superficial observer, the finite and the Infinite seem to be absolutely unconnected—nay, mutually opposed to each other at first sight. One of them appears to be real and the other unreal. To people without philosophical reflection, the finite alone is real and the Infinite unreal or doubtful. Some others

conceive, as
we have seen in the preceding chapter, the
Infinite alone
as real and the finite as unreal—nay
imaginary. When,'
however, the transcendent and the
ynmanent nature of the
Infinite is clearly understood, it will be
seen that the In-
finite unrelated to the finite is indeed an
abstraction. As
the Infinite containing and supporting the
finite. God is not
only real but the only reality. A finite
abstracted from
the Infinite is indeed unreal; but a finite
subsisting in
the Infinite, far from being unreal, is so
real that apart from
relation to it, the Infinite itself is really an
abstract idea
•devoid of reality. The finite self and the
world of matter
are therefore realities being dependent
upon the Absolute
•and unconditioned Reality, the Infinite.